

**Fiscal Services Division**  
**Legislative Services Agency**  
**Fiscal Note**

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SF 2216 – Core Curriculum (LSB 6127 H-8347)  
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Fiscal Note Version – Amendment H-8347 to SF 2216  
Requested by Representative Cindy Winckler

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**Description**

Amendment H-8347 to SF 2216 (Core Curriculum) requires the Board to adopt core content and performance standards for all students in grades Pre-K through 12, to be implemented by July 1, 2010, and requires school districts and accredited nonpublic schools to include them in any locally developed content standards. The Amendment requires the State Board to convene a task force to develop core content and performance standards, after reviewing the National Assessment of Education Progress standards, standards adopted by other states, and standards identified as best practices by recognized experts. The Board must submit the proposed standards for external independent review prior to adoption. The Amendment specifies the following subject areas that must be addressed by the content and performance standards:

- Pre-K through grade 6 – reading and writing, mathematics, science, social studies, and art.
- Grades 7 through 12 – English and language arts, mathematics, science, history, social studies, and art.

The Amendment requires each school district to align local curriculum, instructional materials, and classroom instruction to the standards and submit evidence of such alignment; and prohibits a student from being denied instruction consistent with the more rigorous standards.

The Amendment further requires the State Board to adopt grade level assessments for each of the core content standard subjects and requires school districts to administer them to students in grades 4, 8 and 11. The State Board is also required to adopt assessments for school districts to administer to students at the end of each unit of algebra, advanced algebra, geometry, biology, chemistry, physics, and English.

The Amendment also requires the Board to develop and deliver, in collaboration with institutions of higher education, professional development to implement standards-based instruction and the Iowa professional development model.

**Background**

Although the Amendment does not speak to development or implementation of assessments, federal law requires the development of new assessments for reading, math, and science in grades 3-8 and 11 when content standards are modified.

**Assumptions**

State Costs – The costs of Amendment H-8347 are associated with the requirements for development and implementation of assessments. The Department of Education has provided an estimate based on two overall assumptions:

- Requiring the adoption of performance standards at every grade level necessitates the use of assessments at every grade level to determine whether students have met the performance standards. While the Amendment requires that the grade level assessments be administered at only three grade levels, the Department's estimate assumes they would be necessary at all grade levels.

- All standards and assessments must be newly developed. Other states and organizations, however, have already developed and implemented these assessments. While there would likely be significant costs to purchase assessments developed elsewhere, it would be significantly less than starting from scratch.

This fiscal note estimates the State's cost based on the Department's assumption of developing new assessments for every grade level, over a two-year period, at a cost of \$1.5 million per assessment. The Department has indicated that it is necessary to develop two forms of each assessment in the initial phase of test development.

- The cost of the first form of each assessment is \$1.0 million.
- The cost of the second form of each assessment is \$500,000
- The assessments would be developed over two years, FY 2010 and FY 2011, at an average cost of \$1.5 million per assessment.
- Six subject-area assessments for grades K-6 = \$63.0 million over two years.
- Seven subject-area assessments for grades 7-12 = \$63.0 million over two years.
- Seven end-of-course assessments = \$10.5 million over two years.

The expenses of the task force to develop core content standards in FY 2009 are estimated to be \$300,000. The estimate also assumes a one-time cost in FY 2010 of \$1.6 million for an external review by an independent nonprofit educational organization.

Federal Funds – The Department has also noted that the U.S. Department of Education could withhold Iowa's federal Title I state administrative funds if the State is found to be out of compliance for delaying implementation of assessments aligned to the new standards. Other states in this situation have been threatened with the loss of 10.0% to 25.0% of the Title I state administrative funds. For Iowa, this would amount to between \$76,000 and \$190,000. Utilizing assessments already developed by other entities would mitigate any delay in aligning assessments to the new standards. This fiscal note assumes there will be no loss in federal funding as a result of the new standards.

School District Costs – The statewide cost to local school districts to administer, score, and report results from assessments mandated in H-8347, beginning in FY 2011, assumes the following:

- Average number of students per grade level is estimated to be 43,947.
- The cost to administer, score, and report results from each assessment is \$18 per student.
- Grade 4: 43,947 students taking 6 subject-area tests at \$18 per student = \$4.7 million.
- Grades 8 and 11: 87,894 students taking 14 subject-area tests at \$18 per student = \$22.1 million.
- The current annual statewide cost for administering, scoring, and reporting results of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) and the Iowa Test of Educational Development (ITED) is \$500,000.

### **Fiscal Impact**

The fiscal impact of Amendment H-8347 to SF 2216 to the State General Fund is estimated to be \$300,000 in FY 2009, \$68.3 million in FY 2010 and \$69.9 million in FY 2011 for development of assessments. It is anticipated that purchasing existing assessments would cost significantly less, but lack of data prevents an estimate.

The statewide cost to local school districts is estimated to be \$26.3 million per year, beginning in FY 2011, for administration, scoring, and reporting of assessments mandated by the Amendment.

**Sources**

Department of Education  
Iowa Association of School Boards

/s/ Holly M. Lyons

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April 9, 2008

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The fiscal note and correctional impact statement for this bill was prepared pursuant to Joint Rule 17 and pursuant to Section 2.56, Code of Iowa. Data used in developing this fiscal note and correctional impact statement are available from the Fiscal Services Division, Legislative Services Agency to members of the Legislature upon request.

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